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Message Text

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USIA(EAP) - MR. PAYEFF
VOA - MR. GIDDENS
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O R 022015Z MAY 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL NAHA
VOA KADENA AB OKINAWA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 090475

E.O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: SCUL, PFOR, TECH, JA
SUBJECT:CONSULTATIONS RE VOA RELAY STATION ON OKINAWA

REF: A) TOKYO 4774
B) TOKYO 4198

1. FORMAL CONSULTATIONS WITH GOJ MAY 7-8 ON FUTURE OF OKINAWA VOA RELAY STATION SHOULD BE LIMITED TO DISCUSSION OF SINGLE ISSUE OF "FUTURE COOPERATION" AT PRESENT SITE BEYOND 1977. ONLY AFTER FULL RESTATEMENT OF USG INTEREST IN CONTINUING VOA OPERATIONS ON OKINAWA INDEFINITELY AND FORMAL EXPRESSION OF USG DESIRE TO DO SO SHOULD EMBASSY ENTERTAIN GOJ REQUEST THAT RELAY STATION OPERATIONS BE TERMINATED WITHIN PERIOD PROVIDED FOR IN ARTICLE VIII OF REVERSION AGREEMENT. EMBASSY SHOULD THEN FORMALLY REQUEST RECONSIDERATION OF GOJ POSITION. WITH SINGLE EXCEPTION NOTED PARA 5, DISCUSSION OF TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF EVENTUAL VOA TRANSFER FROM OKINAWA SHOULD BE LEFT FOR SUBSEQUENT DETAILED CONSULTATIONS.
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2. BASIC US POSITION REMAINS UNCHANGED FROM THAT EXPRESSED TO GOJ DURING 1971 REVERSION NEGOTIATIONS. EMBASSY MAY WISH TO DRAW ON FOLLOWING POINTS IN PRESENTING USG CASE FOR CONTINUED OPERATION OF RELAY STATION:

A. INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING IS LEGITIMATE USG UNDERTAKING, FULLY COMPATIBLE WITH CLOSE, CORDIAL US-JAPAN

RELATIONSHIP. TWENTY YEAR HISTORY OF VOA TRANSMISSIONS FROM OKINAWA HAS BEEN FREE OF SIGNIFICANT UNFAVORABLE INCIDENTS OR ADVERSE THIRD-COUNTRY REACTION. IN PRESENT INTERNATIONAL ATMOSPHERE IN EAST ASIA VOA IS INOFFENSIVE ACTIVITY WHICH USG CONSIDERS TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE AND BENEFICIAL.

B. THE OKINAWA FACILITY PERFORMS A MECHANICAL RELAY FUNCTION ONLY: NO PROGRAMMING ORIGINATES THERE AND THE ENTIRE OPERATION IS THEREFORE A TECHNICAL RATHER THAN A SUBSTANTIVE ONE. THE BROADCAST MATERIAL, WHICH ORIGINATES ENTIRELY IN THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES, IS, AS THE GOJ IS WELL AWARE, INFORMATIONAL AND CULTURAL IN NATURE.

C. VOA FACILITIES ON OKINAWA CANNOT EASILY BE DUPLICATED ELSEWHERE IN THE AREA. FEW, IF ANY, ALTERNATE LOCATIONS WOULD OFFER COMPARABLE CONDITIONS. RELOCATION WOULD BE A COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT UNDERTAKING, POSSIBLY REQUIRING PROLONGED NEGOTIATIONS WITH ONE OR MORE FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AS WELL AS CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL AND ACTION.

4. DEPT CONCURS IN EMBASSY VIEW (REF B) THAT GOJ POSITION PRESENTED AT PREPARATORY CONFERENCE MARCH 28 LEAVES LITTLE POSSIBILITY OF EXTENSION OF VOA OPERATIONS ON OKINAWA BEYOND 1977. NEVERTHELESS, WE WISH TO MAKE STRONG CASE FOR "CONTINUED OPERATION" AND TO LEAVE NO DOUBT THAT TERMINATION OF VOA OPERATION ON OKINAWA IS RESULT OF FORMAL GOJ REQUEST. EMBASSY SHOULD ALSO MAKE CLEAR THAT US DOES NOT CONSIDER ITSELF BOUND BY UNILATERAL GOJ DIET INTERPRETATION OF REVERSION AGREEMENT LANGUAGE, I.E., "UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES" (PARA 6 REF B), AND FULLY CONFIDENTIAL

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EXPECTS TO OPERATE VOA FACILITY ON OKINAWA UNTIL ALTERNATE FACILITIES ARE COMPLETED. (SEPTEL COVERS THIS POINT.)

5. PAO-DESIGNATE WILLIAM MILLER, FORMER VOA DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PLANS ATTEND MAY 7-8 CONSULTATIONS. DEPT AND USIA AGREE THAT HIS PARTICIPATION IN INITIAL SESSION WILL PROVIDE VALUABLE ELEMENT OF CONTINUITY IF REMOVAL OF VOA FACILITY SUBSEQUENTLY BECOMES NECESSARY. WHILE

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TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS ARE TO BE AVOIDED, MILLER WILL BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT EMBASSY ON SUBJECT OF GOJ RESERVATION OF 1178 KHZ FREQUENCY WHICH SHOULD BE RAISED FORMALLY IN INITIAL SESSION. (MILLER TRAVEL PLANS SUBJECT SEPTEL.)

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